

REPORT DETAILS

Report Submission Date

12/25/2023

Reported Company/Branch Information

Location Switzerland - World Health Organization

City/State/Zip: Switzerland)

Please identify the person(s) engaged in this behavior:

Tedros Ghebreyesus - Director-General of the World Health Organization

Michael Ryan - Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies Programme

Where did this incident or violation occur? Please provide details as to the exact location (country, province, city if known; if applicable, specify office or project location) where the incident is happening?

The WHO (*World Health Organization), located in Geneva Switzerland.

When did the Incident(s) occur?

June 5, 2020

Are there any witnesses to this incident?

Do Not Know/Do Not Wish To Disclose

Have you reported this matter to anyone in the Organization? If so, who did you report to?

Do not wish to answer.

Details

The WHO (*World Health Organization), located in Geneva Switzerland, published a dangerously disinformative statement on the webpage:

"https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters",

...and the infographic webpage: "https://cdn.who.int/media/images/default-source/health-topics/coronavirus/myth-busters/mythbuster-masks.png".

****Both published web pages make this incorrect and potentially harmful claim:**

"The prolonged use of medical masks can be uncomfortable. However, it does not lead to CO2 intoxication nor oxygen deficiency." -The World Health Organization.

That statement has been scientifically proven to be incorrect.

In a peer-reviewed science research paper titled "Surgical Masks Affect the Peripheral Oxygen Saturation and Respiratory Rate of Anesthesiologists" a team from the Department of Anesthesiology, Qilu Hospital of Shandong University, Jinan, China found that "wearing SMs for more than 2 h can significantly decrease SpO2".

[Yang, S., Fang, C., Liu, X., Liu, Y., Huang, S., Wang, R., & Qi, F. (2022). Surgical Masks Affect the Peripheral Oxygen Saturation and Respiratory Rate of Anesthesiologists. *Frontiers in Medicine*, 9, 844710. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmed.2022.844710>]

So we can easily see how the World Health Organization's incorrect claim could irresponsibly cause innocent people to improperly direct children who suffer from breathing conditions to wear oxygen-restricting face masks.

The WHO Code of Ethics Section 3(c) states: "We hold ourselves and others accountable for words and actions."

If that is so, there should be a commitment by the WHO not only to retract the incorrect statement made by the WHO's aforementioned false claim but to let the public know of the misinformation it had published and what the correct information is.

Follow-Up Notes

12/25/2023 4:39 AM

"In pregnant women, the use of masks during exertion or at rest over long periods of time is to be regarded as critical (...)

If there is clear scientific evidence of increased dead space ventilation with possible accumulation of CO2 in the mother's blood, the use of masks by pregnant women for more than 1 h, as well as under physical stress, should be avoided in order to protect the unborn child (...)

The hypercapnia-promoting masks could act as a confounder of the fetal/maternal CO2 gradient in this case."

[Kisielinski, K., Giboni, P., Prescher, A., Klosterhalfen, B., Graessel, D., Funken, S., Kempfski, O., & Hirsch, O. (2021). Is a Mask That Covers the Mouth and Nose Free from Undesirable Side Effects in Everyday Use and Free of Potential Hazards? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(8). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18084344>]

Follow-Up Questions/Comments

12/25/2023 3:57 AM posted by Organization

Thank you for reaching out to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (IOS).

We acknowledge receipt of your report and the matter you have raised.

IOS will review your report and contact you in due course.

Please also note that in order to fully consider your case, we might need additional information, which would be requested from you through this website. In this context, you are kindly encouraged to log back into the hotline website, using the below credentials, to check for any updates.

Best regards,
Office of Internal Oversight Services
World Health Organization

12/25/2023 4:21 AM posted by Reporter

I would also like to add that on the same page mentioned in the original report: "<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>" there is the statement: "Cold weather and snow CANNOT kill the COVID-19 virus". This is a misnomer. Nothing can kill viruses because viruses are not alive. They are inanimate objects, made of DNA or RNA, sometimes surrounded by a protein coat -which all objects exiting a cell get wrapped in through exocytosis. Note that even when merely shards of DNA or RNA we still consider it a "virus" even without the protein coat viruses sometimes receive from exiting the cell membrane, and that depends on whether the genetic sequence tells the ribosomes to do something that ends up being harmful to the host organism. Otherwise, we just call the gene sequence an "exosome" or an "endosome".

But regardless, viruses are not alive, they do not qualify the definition of a living organism, this has always been the scientific consensus -and still is.

Chat Transcripts

There are no chat transcripts for this incident.